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"VUL. SCLOP. 27"

By Smith D. Fry

DURING the great Civil War, every time I was sent to the hospital," says Captain William Shelly, of the Treasury Department at Washington, "it was because something was the matter with me.

"But the worst time of all was after the second battle of Bull Run, when I had 'Vul. Sclop. 27' and didn't know it. It happened this way. When the battle was at its hottest I ran ahead of my men, waving my sword and shouting like a madman. I was a big man physically, and foolhardy to boot. There was no necessity for me to be out in the front, attracting so much attention to myself; for of course the enemy made a target of me, and a big target I was too.

"Something happened when I was close to the enemy; and when I awoke I was in a hospital in Washington, bandaged from my head to my heels. The doctors came around and shook their heads. The nurses looked at me pitifully. I didn't know what had happened; but of one thing I was certain, and that was that they all expected me to die. In a couple of days I saw that they all wondered why I hadn't already died. Meantime, I was accumulating an appetite that amazed all of them, myself included. I kept getting stronger all the time, and in three months I was well and went back and took command of my company.

"Many years after the war was over I happened to be in Washington, and going to the Surgeon-General's office I asked if I could see my hospital record. They turned to the books of the hospitals, and there was my record sure enough. The regimental hospital, the brigade hospital, the corps hospital, the general field hospital and the hospital afloat which carried me to Washington, all the while I was unconscious, had my name and rank down there, and in each book, under the head of 'Diagnosis,' they had written the words 'Vul. Sclop. 27.'

"Well, well," I said to the officials, "I was dangerously near dying at that time, and I'm sure I would have died if I had known what was the matter with me. They never told me that I had 'Vul. Sclop.' or I'd have been simply frightened to death. It must be something terrible to have it, and I must have had the twenty-seventh degree of it too."

"That's what you had," said the official. "You must have looked like a sieve."

"Does 'Vul. Sclop.' make a man look like a sieve?" said I.

"When you get the twenty-seventh degree it does," he said.

"It's a wonder that I got well," I replied; "for I was wounded at the same time that I got the 'Vul. Sclop.'"

"That's true also," said he. "And no other man could have lived. No wonder you say they all looked solemnly at you."

"But how does this 'Vul. Sclop.' happen to take a fellow?" I asked. "How could it catch me and I never know it?"

"It was the 'Vul. Sclop.' he said, "that made you lose your consciousness during the battle."

"For Heaven's sake," I said, "tell me about this 'Vul. Sclop.' I have been in battles on land and on sea; and I never knew of 'Vul. Sclop.' until I saw it here in my own record."

"Don't be alarmed," he replied, "when I tell you that 'Vul. Sclop.' is the abbreviation which surgeons use for the words *vulnus sclopeticum*, and those words mean 'Gunshot Wound.' So, I take it from the record that you were wounded twenty-seven times in that one battle."

"Sure enough?" I said. "They plugged twenty-seven holes in me for my foolhardiness; and I got well; but if they had shot the words 'Vul. Sclop.' at me in the hospital they would have put a finish to my career. As it is, I happened on several other 'Vul. Sclops.' in other battles, all unbeknown to myself that the 'Sclops.' were so deadly when seen on hospital records."

"THE GOAL," a Double-Page Foot-ball Picture by Will Greff. Next Sunday. See page 12.

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